p. 2
p. 3
p. 4

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

E. A. BERGMAN September 7th, 1957

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FOR PEACE & SOCIALISM

be bigger and better, with stricter discipline. Capitalism means a wage system? Right—our wage system would have wider differentials. Capitalist states had their traitors? Our traitors would be more numerous and of higher rank. Capitalists are merchants of death and will export arms irrespective of possible military line-ups? We too can sell arms (at the cheapest price) to our ideological enemies—and make pacts with them too. The capitalists drown rebellions in blood in their occupied countries? So can we—and with greater terror and fancier excuses. The capitalists make H-Bombs? We also. And so anxious are we to prove our superiority—we make press-button genocide a possibility before they do.

Surely, comrades, we have only to look at this record of achievement—only briefly outlined—to see what the workers of the world have to gain by supporting Communism instead of capitalism! The sad thing is, however, that by demonstrating their equality or superiority in technical matters, the Communists have had to accept so much of the practise of capitalism that their socialism has been completely defeated. In building up their state to defeat the capitalist powers with their own weapons the Communists have produced a State identical in all its bad aspects with the kind of State the capitalists aspire to—and worse than that which actually exists in capitalist countries.

Virtues Bring Vices

There is no doubt that the Western democracies envy the control of their peoples which the totalitarian States have. But since bourgeois capitalism justifies free competition in the internal economy, so also it has to allow a degree of free expression. The bourgeois vices bring with them the bourgeois virtues. And the Communist virtues—of eliminating the chaos of money-grubbing competition, for example—bring with them the vices of totalitarianism, which far outweigh the virtues and do, in time, bring back most of the vices of capitalism. Which is what has happened in Russia.

The fantastic part of the whole conflict between East and West is the growing similarity between the régimes. In the West, under the guise of 'security' the states are assuming more and more power over their peoples. From the East the state is engaging more and more in the international intrigues of power politics and balances of power—the game by which the democracies have built empires and defended their jungle interests.

And now the Russians—with the help of German scientists who prior to their capture in 1945 had been working for Hitler—have produced a super model of the V2 which was used against London at the end of the last war. But now the range of this wonderful weapon is 4,000-5,000 miles and is probably accurate to within 100 miles at full range, which with the destructive radius of H-Bombs being what it is, is accurate enough.

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In this Issue:

Power, Responsibility and Freedom - p. 2

From the Significant Period - p. 3

Letters to the Editors - p. 4

Freedom

THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

Vol. 18, No. 36

E. A. BERGMAN

September 7th, 1957

ICBM FOR PEACE & SOCIALI

A NEW combination of letters has been added to the vocabulary of power. After GPU and MVD; after NATO and SHAPE; above and beyond them all we must now perceive the grim shadow of ICBM. The Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile is now a reality, and—added to the horror to which we have now become accustomed, the H-Bomb—presents the madmen who own it with the power of instantaneous and indefensible death and destruction over millions of people thousands of miles away.

The lunatic race for the 'ultimate deterrent' has been won by Russia. The country called socialist has licked the capitalists at their own game, and by dint of the most intense and speedy development of armaments ever achieved by any nation in peacetime, has demonstrated the superiority of socialist planning and the love of peace of a people imbued with the revolutionary ideology of the brotherhood of man.

'Anything you can do, we can do better' has been the theme-song of the men in the Kremlin since October 1917. So the capitalists had prisons? We would have bigger ones—with more prisoners. The capitalists had armies? Ours would be bigger and better, with stricter discipline. Capitalism means a wage system? Right—our wage system would have wider differentials. Capitalist states had their traitors? Our traitors would be more numerous and of higher rank. Capitalists are merchants of death and will export arms irrespective of possible military line-ups? We too can sell arms (at the cheapest price) to our ideological enemies—and make pacts with them too. The capitalists drown rebellions in blood in their occupied countries? So can we—and with greater terror and fancier excuses. The capitalists make H-Bombs? We also. And so anxious are we to prove our superiority—we make press-button genocide a possibility before they do.

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"The movement looks to the future. Its new Secretary-General, Mr. Derick Mirfin, is only twenty-seven. His appointment is typical of the new spirit

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"The movement looks to the future. Its new Secretary-General, Mr. Derick Mirfin, is only twenty-seven. His appointment is typical of the new spirit which has begun to stir people of liberal views. The ideological initiative so long held by the supporters of dictatorship both by Left and Right is slowly passing back to those who seek to liberate rather than to dominate. In this process the Liberal International is playing a worthy part.

These are fine words and we thought worthy of investigation, but we are sad to report (although not altogether surprised) that the leaders of European Liberalism who would seek to "liberate" rather than "dominate" propose to do so by the usual methods. A report in the same issue of the *News Chronicle* on the congress has this to say:

Leaders of European Liberalism agreed yesterday that the West must revert to a big build-up of conventional armies as an answer to Russia's success with nuclear rockets.

The majority view in a debate at the Liberal International at Oxford was that, now the big power blocs are evenly matched in nuclear weapons, the West is "at a serious military disadvantage" if local wars are fought with conventional weapons.

Without a build-up on this side, therefore, the West "will have to choose between submission (to Russia) and the disaster of a nuclear war," according to a draft resolution which will be voted on to-day.

British representatives "did not seem happy" with the way the debate went. We hope that this mild display of disapproval by British Liberals might influence the congress. One man, Mr. Leonard Behrens, President of the British party, is sensitive enough to see the lack of that "new spirit" hailed by the *News Chronicle*. He said:

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The demand for bigger armies was led by delegates from a traditionally pacific nation—Switzerland.

Dr. Willy Bretscher, of Switzerland, retorted that Russian tanks could not be met only with ideas. "I warn you," he said, "not to neglect the important aspect of military defence."

The myth about Swiss passivity should be exploded by this time. War has been extremely useful to them, for even though they cease manufacture of armaments during actual war, whilst there is a nominal peace they supply, to whichever country can afford to buy, small-scale components for weapons, like gun-sights, firing mechanisms, and many other intricate items.

In peace time they are a prosperous little nation thriving on the potential lunacy of other nations committed by pacts and panic to rearmament and war; the Swiss have one "pact" with the rest of the world which is their neutrality and their willingness to act as a key point for under-the-counter transactions in wartime, from which they gain a steady revenue from many doubtful sources.

It is quite plain that Switzerland has an interest in the rearmament of all countries and particularly her European neighbours, who are not only her most obvious customers, but also her most likely protectors from the Soviet Union who may not be so ready to recognise her neutrality.

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"That is why they and their political placemen are so dead set against peaceful co-existence and are doing everything they can to poison the international atmosphere and prevent disarmament."

This holier-than-thou attitude might have been more convincing if it had not been followed by the Tass announcement one month later of Russia's own "super long-distance inter-continental, multi-stage ballistic rocket", which underlined the similarity of Soviet and American policy. "No matter what the financial position of a capitalist country, what poverty the people suffer, the government can always be relied upon to make the taxpayer foot the armament bill", says *New Times*. Very true, but equally true of the Soviet Union. *New Times*, painting a picture of the rocket racket as a monopoly of the 'munitions barons', asks, "Where is the dividing line between the Pentagon and Wall Street? There is none." One might just as well say "Where is the dividing line between the Pentagon and the Kremlin? Or, for that matter, Whitehall? Their activities are complementary.

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Now to try to relate this monstrosity to a socialist ideology is patently ridiculous. It is a weapon of mass murder and those who produce it must have supreme contempt for human life. They simply cannot think in terms of brotherhood, solidarity, equality or any of the basic tenets of socialism. No more can those in the West responsible for *their* weapons of mass murder be considered to have any link with a Christian way of thought.

What has so corrupted the basic ideas of the societies of East and West? It is the same in both cases: *Power*. The temporal power through which the churches of Christendom have tortured, burned and educated themselves into establishment have long since obliterated the true teaching of Gentle Jesus. The absolute power, justified in the name of security, which the Kremlin has wielded over its faithful has long since trampled in the dust the principles which inspired the men and women who originally made the revolution.

Power has corrupted the people concerned and conquered their ideas—and always will. An ideology, a religion, based upon authority, can only produce an authoritarian régime. If we want a world in which this corruption is not possible we must built a world without authority. And so far only anarchism gives us a social philosophy built upon that self-evident truth.

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"We are trying to make up for where we lag in sales-talk by a huge publicity campaign for our weapons. Mr. Duncan Sandys, Minister of Defence, is playing a leading part in the sales drive. His self-appointed task is to stress for the first time our 'know-how' as a guided missile Power.

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The financial implications of this last sentence of Mr. Sandys (if it is true), can be gauged from the fact that America is spending in the current financial year 2,000 million dollars on ICBM projects alone, and the ICBM tested in America in July was a failure.

In his Canberra speech on 20th August, Mr. Sandys declared that:

"The latest British fighters would bring down a greater proportion of enemy bombers than during the last war, but because a few carrying hydrogen weapons might get through . . . we have taken a very bold step in deciding not to do the impossible. We decided not to defend the whole country, but to defend only our bomber bases."

The most apposite comment on this statement comes from a letter from Mr. John Sibly in the *Manchester Guardian*, who writes:

"It is interesting to reflect that when these bases were established we were assured that they were vital for our defence. Now it is admitted that the bases which were to defend us are themselves likely to attract attack, and that the rest of us are to be abandoned to massacre so that they may be saved. Mr. Sandys praises the 'calmness' with which we have 'accepted these harsh but inescapable facts'. How does he know we have 'accepted' them? What chance have any of us had to express any opinion? What notice would be taken of us if we did?"

Harvard's Costly Secrets

Harvard University hopes it will shortly get rid of a mass of secret war documents, mainly scientific, most of which it is not even allowed to examine. It is stated that the Office of Naval Research will take over the material, which has been at Harvard more than 10 years at a cost of over £400 a year.

—*Daily Telegraph* 12/8/57.

And Britain's Costly Services

Plans for a new campaign against waste in the Services are disclosed by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee in a report published yesterday. The "folly" of a War Office decision on combat vehicle production and Air Ministry "lack of financial control" are criticised severely.

Judgment is passed in the following cases.

SWIFT AIRCRAFT: Total expenditure on the Swift was £40 million. The RAF received 129 flyable planes and 23 others, none of which can fulfil their intended role.

COMBAT VEHICLES: About £16 million was spent on developing and producing an Army ¼-ton G.S. combat vehicle, but production was abandoned because of cost and complication.

TEN-TON VEHICLE: Cancellation charges of £195,000 had to be paid through an "oversight".

—*Daily Telegraph* 14/8/57.

POWER, RESPONSIBILITY & FREED

THE following notes, texts and comments are intended as but a preliminary sketch of a libertarian approach to the questions of power, responsibility and freedom.

I

The Meaning of Power

Erich Fromm, in his book "Man For Himself", points out that the term 'power' can be used in two ways:

1. When we speak of the power *to do* something—*e.g.* the power to speak, to create, to walk and so on. And

2. When we speak of power *over* something. That is to say: domination.

It is in the sense of power defined as domination that the term is used in what follows.

Power is that relationship between men wherein one man, or a group of men, can command the obedience of others. It is essentially the imposition of the will of one individual upon that of another individual, or of the will of one group upon that of another group, involving a dominative-submissive pattern of conduct. And this relationship is the distinguishing characteristic of power whether it has been gained by the bullet or the ballot, or whether it is autocratic or democratic in method.

The Effects of Power

The effects of power can roughly be divided into three parts:

A. As a divisive element in human relationships;

B. As the product and creator of a psychological conditions of desiring to wield power, or to submit to it;

C. As a means of denying ethical choice which is the basis of moral responsibility.

A. The division which power introduces in human relationships is that of the power-holders and the power-less. Politically this is expressed in the institution of government; the division of human beings into rulers and ruled. Economically, it is expressed in privilege: an inequality of status in regard to the means of life which results in an owning or controlling class obtaining preferential treatment by way of exploitation. Psychologically, it is expressed in sadism and masochism. the desire to dominate and the desire to submit.

Although in radical circles it is still customary to treat political and economic power as distinct categories, the development of the modern state makes this distinction increasingly meaningless. To-day, the state, even when controlled by conservatives, is continually taking over control of the economic system and a rising élite of bureaucrats, managers and technicians is merging into the old capitalist élite to form a new ruling class.

The possession of power marks a man off from his fellows. This can be seen most clearly in an institution such as the army when a man is promoted from the ranks and his former buddies become his subordinates, but it is a common occurrence in less openly authoritarian bodies. A man who is marked off from others by his being a power-holder demands to be treated differently. The deference to which he considers his possession of power entitles him can often be obtained by a greater display of material wealth than that of those whom he commands. The possession of political power inescapably brings with it economic privilege, just as the possession of economic power necessitates the maintenance of political power in order to provide the legal sanction for exploitation[1]. The class divisions of rulers and ruled, exploiters and exploited, are therefore the inevitable concomitants of power.

B. A prominent feature of power relationships is psychological insecurity. Individuals who are related in this way lack trust in themselves and in their fellows. They therefore consider that the only method of maintaining order is by means of power. Power is exercised by coercion and coercion involves repression: the forcing of men into predetermined norms of behaviour. The individual is not allowed to develop his inner potentialities except in a distorted and one-sided manner. He must accept the dictates of an external authority. Power thus causes (neurotic) conflict, this conflict produces insecurity and insecurity induces in some individuals a desire to wield power and in others a desire to submit to power.

The definition of power given by Fromm in his "Man For Himself" has already been mentioned. In the passage in which this definition occurs, he also outlines the psychological reasons for the desire for power:

" . . . What is power? It is rather ironical that this word denotes two contradictory concepts: *power of*=capacity and *power over*=domination. This contradiction, however, is of a particular kind. Power=domination results from the paralysis of power=capacity. *'Power over'* is the perversion of *'power to'*. The ability of man to make productive use of his powers is his potency; the inability is his impotence. With his power of not ignore—the first is that it claims, as small human societies have always claimed, a kind of allegiance which interfered with our responsibility to other people, inside and outside our own group, and the second is that political power, even in a democracy, attracts individuals who have become bent in growing, who have failed to establish the normal type of relationship with others, and who compensate by a desire to control, to direct, to assert themselves. That may sound very hard on members of parliament—it is fairly obvious if we apply it to a bad state, to the Nazi régime, for instance: the point I want to make to you is that identical forces are at work in any society which is controlled predominantly from the centre . . . Whatever cultural or practical value these institutions have, we have to remember that they owe much of their strength, in modern society, to their power to capture our spare social impulses, to live on our frustrations. And love and sociality, if they are left in mid-air or snubbed, can themselves become the source of the kind of irrational hatred and violence which horrifies many people in the industrial and military society of to-day.

"In dealing with institutional power we are dealing with a symptom, we are always on the verge of the destructive, the irrational, upon which the desire to govern and the desire to obey are based . . . ".[3]

C. Power, says Comfort, interferes with our responsibility to our fellows. Without ethical choice we cannot be responsible and power denies ethical choice. This denial is twofold:

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The Essence

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The effects of power can roughly be divided into three parts:

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(It is interesting to note, in parenthesis, the similarity of Fromm's definition of domination with Simone Weil's definition of force in her essay "The Iliad, or The Poem of Force". She wrote: "To define force—it is that *x* that turns anybody who is subjected to it into a thing. Exercised to the limit, it turns man into a thing in the most literal sense: it makes a corpse of him.")

Alex Comfort is also of the same opinion as Fromm:

" . . . It may sound uncommonly odd to suggest that Hitler was activated by love when he murdered several million Jews, but it seems very likely, from what we know about the motives which produce tyrants, that he was motivated by the desire for praise, or success, or affection, or more accurately by his failure to get it. . . .

I realise how large a part the state and its institutions have played in the growth of our traditions and in the stabilising of civilisation. But there are two facts about it to-day which we can-

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C. Power, says Comfort, interferes with our responsibility to our fellows. Without ethical choice we cannot be responsible and power denies ethical choice. This denial is twofold:

Firstly it denies it to the power-holders. The primary object of any power group is to retain its power. Unless it has power it cannot achieve its aims (whether they are openly stated or not). Members of a power group, therefore, have to act from this standpoint and must always make their decisions in the light of it. Their decisions, in consequence, are not based upon ethical choice, the choosing between right and wrong, but upon expediency: that which must be done in order to keep in power. A political party may profess to be opposed to conscription on principle and vigorously denounce it as the badge of slavery. Should it get into power, however, and be faced with a situation in which the state it controls is militarily threatened by a rival, it must resort to conscription if that is necessary to mobilise sufficient military (and industrial) force to defend the state. Should it not do this it would lose its power. A power group may seek to give a moralistic justification to its expediencies, or to excuse them as 'lesser evils', but this cannot hide the fact that it is choosing to act not on an ethical principle but according to an expedient which it calculates will secure it in its dominant position.

Secondly: the existence of a power structure means that the masses subjected to it are denied the right to determine their own lives. By acquiescing in the existence of a ruler-ruled pattern of relationships they effectively hand over the keeping of their consciences to their rulers. This is most vividly illustrated in an institution such as an army in which a supreme evil like murder is dictated from above and cannot be disobeyed except on pain of heavy punishment, or even of death. Within a power structure, however, we are all in the position of soldiers and, although we are allowed a partial autonomy in certain areas of our lives, our rulers retain the ultimate authority to choose for us. Human beings are reduced to a condition of irresponsibility, and the more their lives are controlled by the power-holders, the more they become things and the more their humanity is denied and humiliated. Freedom of choice is in inverse proportion to the strength of power.

S. E. PARKER.

(To be continued)

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[1] "The rank of authority is always judged by the value of things. Everything is valued by measurement, so that we find authority always possesses the things which measure value. Lands rank the nobles, soldiers the military commanders, churches the priests, and money the capitalists. There was never authority wielded except by those having possession of concrete things, *i.e.* owners of property". *Anarchism: A Philosophy of Freedom,* (1943?) by Frederick Lohr. Page 30.

[2] *Man For Himself,* (1949) pp. 87-88.

[3] *The Pattern of the Future,* (1949) pp. 26-28.

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The Essence of Freedom

Comment on a Times Editorial

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This feeling among politicians of their own importance and indispensability is, admits the *Times,* encouraged as a result of the acceptance by the modern journalist of the "paraphernalia of propaganda, the Press conference, the hand-out, off the record mass talks". And it notes that in recent years there have been signs that the same idea has been gaining ground with "responsible citizens". "Are not the consequences of setback to the State now so great that nothing can be excluded from the Government's care of the national interest?"

To this question, the *Times* declares, there is a "simple answer", and in the course of giving it, enunciates its second principle that *"the essence of freedom is freedom of information"*:

condensed or "cut" to publishable proportions. Assuming the *Times* principles are accepted by journalists then there is no reason why considerations of space should disturb either the balance of news or the truthfulness of what is published.

Yet these are the first victims; the former of the popular press (where a juicy murder trial will spread its sordid details all over the paper) the latter in both the popular and "responsible" Press. Indeed so long as the Press is a money-making organisation it will subordinate news to a pandering to public demand for everything but news! With a few exceptions it is surely true to say that our national newspapers are not in fact *News* papers, but could be more accurately described as daily *magazines,* designed to provide light entertainment and keep our commuting population distracted during long hours of strap-hanging to and from work.

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> It is an even higher national interest to keep the dissemination of news and opinion, whether at home or abroad, completely free from the faintest vestige of influence by Government, Ministers, civil servants or any other interested parties. This may lead to *contretemps,* to awkward moments for Governments, be embarrassing to Ministers, may even occasionally cause what may fairly be considered the national interest to be harmed in some particular case. But in every such instance this is only a small loss compared with the gain that the public has in preserving a free, unfettered, and so far as authority is concerned irresponsible, flow of news. In Britain so far there is no danger of this supply failing . . . Those good people who ask if it can always be in the public interest for the truth to be told, those who hold that what may be published in one form or in one place should not be disseminated in another, must get back to first principles. The essence of freedom is freedom of information . . . There is, in the end, no half-way house in this matter between freedom, whatever its drawbacks, and dictatorship.

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FOR those of us who are obliged to read many newspapers, it is clear that such terms as "news" and "truth" mean different things to different editors and newspaper proprietors! It is not enough to say that newspapers have only the space to deal with a limited amount of news, and that as a consequence a selection must be made, and reports condensed or "cut" to publishable proportions. Assuming the *Times* principles are accepted by journalists then there is no reason why considerations of space should disturb either the balance of news or the truthfulness of what is published.

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If it is argued that very few people would read a newspaper if news and opinion were presented straight we would be inclined to reply that it were better that a few people read the news straight than the present arrangement in which millions read it doctored with prejudice, racial hatred, and nationalistic bias, larded with escapist nonsense and sexless cheese-cake.

However much the public yearns for its daily dose of newsprint it is also true that there is a widespread distrust of what is published by the press as news. (Just as most people denounce politicians as scoundrels but go on voting for them at election time as usual). Intuitively (assuming that the monopolistic and financial set-up of the "millionaire press" has not filtered through to them) the public does not believe in the "independence" of the press; if it is a mouthpiece of anybody it is of those in power rather than of the man-in-the-street. And of course they are right. The Press is not independent —not even the *Times* which traditionally considers itself as the power behind . . . the government! Where profits are secondary considerations, other interests or ambitions, political or economic, are the *raison d'etre* for what remains of the Press. (Perhaps we should add in the interests of truth that we are only expressing our opinion! We will gladly retract if any evidence is forthcoming to indicate that there are daily news-

☞ Continued on p. 3

Freedom
THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

Vol. 18, No. 36. September 7, 1957

The Essence of Freedom

Continued from p. 2

papers in this country which exist for the sole purpose of publishing news straight, without considerations of readers' reactions or effect on advertisers, political supporters or other pressure groups . . . not to mention the political leanings or ambitions of the publishers or editor).

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WE suspect the Press when it poses as the champion of freedom, and the guarantee that the voice of informed public opinion shall be heard and followed by governments. The Press, like the police, carries on whatever régime is in power. When dictatorships take over, or countries are "occupied" as in France in the last war, the Press, with a few honourable exceptions of men who are locked up or join the ranks of the world's refugees, carries on. When "liberation" came in France in 1945 the newspapers which had collaborated were not allowed to publish under their old titles, and in Italy the change of régimes was marked by just adding the word "new" to the old title. Are we to believe however that a new set of journalists replaced the old overnight?

The only real believers in the freedom of the Press are symbolised by the resistance movement in Spain which 18 years after Franco's seizure of power goes on expressing its belief in this freedom by issuing its clandestine newspapers printed and distributed under the most difficult conditions and incurring risks undreamed of by the editor of the *Times* in his wildest moments of independence from governmental ukases! What have the eminent liberal Spanish journalists produced in these years as a contribution to the freedom of information—that "essence of freedom"—in Spain? What indeed has the *Times* published in its columns in the past 18 years to encourage those in Spain who have gambled their lives to keep alive the idea that a free press is the "essence of freedom", and to encourage Franco and his entourage to see the light?

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***THE VOLGA RISES IN EUROPE*, by Curzio Malaparte. Redman. 16s.**

THE sterile materialism that is accompanying the present Technological Revolution is also producing a society of spectators, willing audiences who have no desire to participate or to exercise the rich variety of their individualism. With this tendency there is a compensating attempt to give significance to a barren reality by linking it with the past and, in one way or another, to take refuge in that past. "Yes, these really are the 'new Elizabethans'," says Kingsley Martin to himself as he witnesses Merdeka celebrations by Malayan students. "In terms of history," writes the Philippine Ambassador, "it is the Asians who are the new Elizabethans, sure of honour and glory . . . " The delivering to his wife of Mussolini's carcase has caused one Italian newspaper to write: "Mussolini is returning to the Romagna, to Italy,

Film Review

WITCH HUNT

(*The Witches of Salem*, The Academy Cinema).

EVERY now and then a vast surge of what we would call demonic possession (if we believed in such things as demons), sweeps through Europe, and believe it or not, America. There was the dancing fever of the Middle Ages, the Titus Oates plot, the Moscow trials, the Nazi pogroms, the Palmer raids, Senator McCarthy, Elvis Presley and the Salem Witch trials. In these maladies individuals lose possession of their senses and give themselves over to strange convulsions, peculiar accusations, delusions of persecution, delusions of grandeur, then like a epileptic fit the attack dies away and the community is left weak and exhausted, wondering what hit them. War could be believed to be an extension of the fit but this is a disease dignified by the State into normal health.

The concept of man as a rational animal has taken many knocks but the persistence of these attacks leads one to believe that given irrational circumstances and unnatural surroundings man will act fully in conformity with these surroundings.

In the Salem Witch trials of 1692, the community was seized by a cult of denunciation of harmless old women as witches. The accusations were made by a group of young girls who threw fits on being confronted by the people they denounced. Many of the accused were tortured and confessed so they were executed as witches; if they survived the torture and did not confess they were executed on the evidence. If they died under torture it was God's will. Eventually the girls went too far in their accusations and denounced citizens of some standing in the community. It was only then that their perjured evidence was discovered to be untrue and no more trials were held.

Upon this basis Arthur Miller has written *The Crucible*, and upon this Jean-Paul Sartre has adapted the film, and Mai Harris translated for sub-titles. At this remove it is impossible to evaluate Arthur Miller's play, particularly since Sartre has joined the witch-hunters of Moscow (on and off) and Arthur Miller has been hunted as a witch but it is possible to see the idealistic conviction shining through Sartre's intellectual abstractions.

The peg on which this hangs is the story of a Puritan (Yves Montand) with a frigid wife (Simone Signoret). The Puritan, John Proctor, has a affaire with a servant-girl (Mylene Demongeot), who goes to a 'witch' for help with her love-affair. She is discovered in the forest by the clergyman and the group turn and denounce the 'witches' in the community. The trials go on and eventually the Puritan, John Proctor, is drawn in and denounced as a 'witch' but not before the community has revolted against the witch-hunt. Proctor is hanged but the populace has learned the lesson and the witch-hunts are finished. The personal story of John Proctor detracts from the strength of the narrative. The idea that the heads of the community encouraged the witch-hunts so that they could further their own ends, seems to be a reflection of the C.P. line, which Jean-Paul Sartre was travelling on at the time of the making of the film.

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men who are locked up or join the ranks of the world's refugees, carries on. When "liberation" came in France in 1945 the newspapers which had collaborated were not allowed to publish under their old titles, and in Italy the change of régimes was marked by just adding the word "new" to the old title. Are we to believe however that a new set of journalists replaced the old overnight?

The only real believers in the freedom of the Press are symbolised by the resistance movement in Spain which 18 years after Franco's seizure of power goes on expressing its belief in this freedom by issuing its clandestine newspapers printed and distributed under the most difficult conditions and incurring risks undreamed of by the editor of the *Times* in his wildest moments of independence from governmental ukases! What have the eminent liberal Spanish journalists produced in these years as a contribution to the freedom of information—that "essence of freedom"—in Spain? What indeed has the *Times* published in its columns in the past 18 years to encourage those in Spain who have gambled their lives to keep alive the idea that a free press is the "essence of freedom", and to encourage Franco and his entourage to see the light?

★

WE suspect the Press when it leads the crusade against the concentration of all power in the hands of government. In fact the opposition of the Press lords is to interference by the government in what they consider to be their domain, and not to government as such. They are as revolutionary as the farmers who resent any government interference in the way they manage their farms but believe that the government should guarantee prices for them by subsidies!

No daily newspaper however opposed it may be to a particular government questions the need for government as the regulating instrument in domestic and international affairs. No daily newspaper distinguishes between real problems and those artificially created by politicians. They treat the political game as a serious matter not as a bubble waiting to be pricked. The Press is, in fact, in the thick of the political struggle; it is responsible for artificially creating or maintaining tensions between people which but for the Press might not exist.

To our minds it is time we forgot about the "traditions" of the Press, and that the Press stopped paying lip service to them. Abuses which are prevented by our "vigilant" daily Press are more than cancelled out by the power they wield to condition, which reduces the public to harmless, brainless, parrots without an opinion of their own.

Perhaps the strongest condemnation of the "free press" of the democracies is that its mass readership are as ill-informed, as prejudiced and ineffectual as their unfortunate counterparts in those countries in which the government controls the Press. As for the informed, thinking, minority they exist in all countries with or without the freedom to publish the *Times* or the *Manchester Guardian*. That minority existed before the advent of the newspaper and contrives in spite of the Press! In saying this we are neither in favour of élites or against the Press as such. We are simply trying to explode the myth of the "free press" that is not free; "news" that is not news; of "freedom" that is not freedom . . . as a first step in man's rediscovery of freedom!

CORRECTION

In the editorial on "Inflation" in last week's FREEDOM, due to a printer's error we were made to declare that

"The public can therefore consider themselves no less guinea-pigs when various measures are taken "to combat inflation" in spite of the assurances given by their governments that they have *not* just the right cure for the disease."

For *"not"* read *"got"*.

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There is little evidence to support such an analysis; the strongest argument which might be put forward in this vein is that the Nationalists are intensely concerned at the overwhelming majority of Africans in South Africa, and are being overzealous (due to panic), in their efforts to avoid being swamped out of the land they have helped to build.

All the evidence does in fact suggest that the Nationalists are precisely what they appear to be—neo-Fascists. And not very stupid either.

Since coming into office they have passed a series of laws which have given them absolute power—the electoral machinery has been tampered with, the courts rigged and the constitution altered. The government can now *legally* get away with anything. All this has been achieved without any serious (from a government's point of view) disturbance or upheaval. This record is in itself an improvement on almost every other dictatorial régime in this century.

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that past. "Yes, these really are the 'new Elizabethans'," says Kingsley Martin to himself as he witnesses Merdeka celebrations by Malayan students. "In terms of history," writes the Philippine Ambassador, "it is the Asians who are the new Elizabethans, sure of honour and glory . . . " The delivering to his wife of Mussolini's carcase has caused one Italian newspaper to write: "Mussolini is returning to the Romagna, to Italy, so that Italy may again be the nation he loved and in the name of which he was betrayed and murdered. Viva il Duce!"

Writers are the worst offenders of all and even now, twelve years after the end of the war, books are being published which seek to perpetuate the illusion of still living in that 'significant' period. Books recounting victorious battles, individual heroism, 'escape' stories, continue to appear, cleverly dressed-up to suggest the urgency of the morning paper. Recently, retired field marshals, air marshals and others of similar rank, faithfully serialised by *The Sunday Times*, have been permitted to publish their memoirs. At this moment others are no doubt putting down the first paragraph of works that will serve to inflate the ego and spice the dullness of 'no-war'.

The defeated, however, in books such as "The Man Outside" and "Flight to Arras", have proved more truthful, more poignant and more profound, simply because victory, or success, is always an illusion in which the size of man and the particular events are distorted. The stark reality is that of Wolfgang Borchert, dead at twenty-seven: 'Along the road runs a man. Along the long, long road. He's afraid. He runs with his fear through the world. Through the swaying world's wave. That man am I. I am twenty-five. And I am on my way. I've been long on my way and I'm still on my way. I want the tram. I must catch the tram, for they are all after me. After me terribly.'

The facile self-confidence of the victorious produces the levity of: 'A ban on the ringing of church bells was announced on June 13, 1940. Henceforth they would be rung only by the military or the police to give warning that an airborne attack was in progress. This arrangement had, in addition to the story-book quality so characteristic of the period, an agreeably traditional flavour; it will take a long time to recover".' *Ringing World*, an organ devoted to the interests of campanology. The ban was seen as "a stunning blow to ringing, from which, even when the war is over, but it was viewed with concern by the (Fleming: "Invasion 1940".).

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The author himself must have had doubts about inflicting on us yet another day to day account of a military campaign because in the Foreword he states: 'This is the first, and so far the only, book that has revealed the underlying significance of the colossal European tragedy implicit in the German war against Soviet Russia. It therefore remains highly topical, not merely because it stresses the "social" character of that war, and of any possible future war against Soviet Russia, but because it poses the fundamental problem of contemporary Europe: the incompatibility of the bourgeois ethic and the proletarian ethic, which is the ethic of the modern world.'

'The fundamental problem', however, is never examined though the reference to a possible war against Soviet Russia makes one suspect that the fact was not overlooked that many readers would find comfort in this picture of the Russian army in retreat, the Mongol 'hordes' made prisoner, and Communism on its knees. So: 'To-day Leningrad is in its death-agony. Its factories are empty, deserted, its machines are silent, its blast-furnaces are extinguished. The arms of its powerful steam-hammers, their great steel fists poised aloft in the silence, are broken.'

And for those who still have an appetite for reading about burning tanks and rotting corpses, and who can become sentimental over the peaceful scenery between bouts of artillery fire, this book offers quite a feast.

About the conquerors of 1942, however, Borchert was later to write: 'When the war is over, the soldier came home.

But he had no bread. Then
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Film Review

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their freedom once more. One of the accused, Mr. Joe Slovo, an advocate conducting his own defence, recently protested: "We could be here permanently . . . for the rest of our lives."

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Nine months ago, 156 men and women were arrested on charges of high treason. 100 Whites and 56 Africans were accused of offences against the State between 1953 and 1956. (Further evidence is now being put forward to cover 1951/52 and '57). The Minister of Justice, Charles Swart, said that Communism had infiltrated into South Africa in a new form, disguised as a demand for equality between white and non-white. Such is the Nationalist definition of treason.

For nine months the 156 prisoners have been forced into complete idleness—and this is only their preparatory examination. As the court meets daily the prosecution produces a mass of allegations, mostly impossible to prove, accusations of complicity in absurd plots, strings of irelevant evidence, and series of statements of demands made in public by the accused for changes which would be regarded as quite reasonable (if impracticable) by Western political standards. The defence answers the accusations and complains bitterly of the prosecution's ridiculous methods and procedure. Nothing is proven and next-to-nothing happens—it is almost a farce—*but*: all the accused have been prevented from doing anything, most of them are financially ruined, all of them are frantically bored, and none of them know when they will regain their freedom once more. One of the accused, Mr. Joe Slovo, an advocate conducting his own defence, recently protested: "We could be here permanently . . . for the rest of our lives."

Most recent news is the report that the chief prosecutor in the trial proper will be Oswald Pirow, Q.C., formerly Minister of Defence under General Hertzog. This report does not necessarily put matters forward but it is an indication of what the future may hold in store, and of the real character of the Nationalist Government.

Oswald Pirow described Hitler when he died as "the greatest man of his age and one of the greatest men of all time." This supporter of the Nazis attempted during the war to found a "New Order" in South Africa, he wanted to establish a "South African Christian European National Socialistic Republic". He is undoubtedly a hater of blacks, Jews, liberals, democrats, socialists, communists and those who disagree with Pirow. He will in short hate, as a matter of course, all those he is to prosecute. His methods will not doubt reflect his prejudice and his fascism.

The appointment of Pirow by the Nationalists can hardly be regarded in any other light than as a further retrograde step towards fascism. The fact that South Africa's own particular brand of fascism is less spectacular, less horrific, less apparent that Hitler's or Mussolini's or Stalin's, is perhaps just a measure of how clever the Nationalists are, and a consequent warning of the danger which they represent. They should not be underestimated, their motives and aims should be understood. Regrettably, few will understand and even fewer will care.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Are We Infallible - or Wishy

I HAVE been a reader of FREEDOM for many years and have admired its courageous outlook but your editorial reply to G.G. of Peebles was anything but courageous.

You say you did not condemn the objectionable tactics of some of the busmen but neither did you show any approval of them. What a lovely piece of fence balancing!

I have noticed that when you receive critical letters, even when the criticism is of a friendly nature, you invariably mount the rostrum and give forth with a papal edict. Do you subscribe to the Infallibility of Editorial Opinion? If not can you quote an occasion when you have admitted to being in error?

You go on to say 'a blind condemning of violence without understanding the underlying reasons, the background, serves no useful purpose.' How beautifully academic and Simon Pure! If you were physically attacked would you pause for a philosophical review of the situation before restraining your attacker or condemning him? You agree that violence proves nothing—then why not say so without any ifs and buts and maybes?

You conclude by saying that you 'were cool about the bus strike and you really did not sound all that happy about it.'

You certainly didn't sound very happy about your reply to G.G., and with such a wishy-washy case it's understandable.
Salisbury. N.H.

EDITOR'S REPLY :

FOR a reason which I shall soon make clear, I had better emerge from behind the screen of anonymous editorship and take responsibility for both the original article (Is this the Class Struggle?—FREEDOM 3/8/57) to which G.G. took exception and last week's reply to his letter of 17th August.

I do this because I cannot remember a time when the Editors of FREEDOM had to admit to being wrong, but I have a very strong recollection of myself being very wrong, in an article written over my initials, and admitting it. Readers may remember that about a year ago —maybe more—if I may be allowed to use the word—I indulged in a controversy with a Mr. Gelstein in which I betrayed considerable ignorance of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1942. N.H. will, I am sure, be glad to hear that I ate humble pie about that, and if he wants the evidence in print I will go to the trouble of looking it out of the files for him.

Most certainly we do not claim any Editorial Infallibility—in fact one of our main complaints about our readers is that they do not seem to react one way or the other to what we say. As G. said in a recent letter, not many comrades seem to be interested in writing in to tell the Editors that they are talking through their hats, and it is actually refreshing to get G.G. of Peebles and N.H. of Salisbury doing just that. At least it means that they are reading and taking note and thinking about what we are

a realisation that it is the weapon of the anarchist case that enables us to analyse events pretty accurately and in the expression of attitudes we naturally think the anarchist attitude is the correct one.

N.H. may have noticed that on occasion we are slow in dealing with certain events—Oman was a recent example. This is because, if we are not in possession of the facts and the situation seems to be confused or obscure, we would rather wait until it clarifies before committing ourselves.

However, let's get back to my misdeeds in sitting on the fence over the busmen's strike. In the first place I don't see why we shouldn't be allowed to sit on the fence now and again. N.H. says that he has admired our courageous outlook—which presumably means that by and large we are positive enough for him. We present a clear case in black and white terms and show exactly where we stand. But I am sure he will realise that at times things happen that cannot be presented in purely black and white terms, and in my opinion the busmen's strike was one of them.

Usually, as N.H. must know, we support strikes because they are a form of the direct action which we think is a more effective method of fighting authority than by parliamentary or constitutional means. But there are strikes for ends with which we most definitely disagree—like that of the busmen in South London who struck against coloured labour being introduced—and others which we don't really care about one way or the other. The bus strike was one such, which is why we were cool about it and that made it all the more surprising that G.G. should take us to task for, as he thought, supporting the violence of the strikers.

Now it is a bit difficult to see from N.H.'s letter just what his position is, or what he wants of us except a series of positive statements—which he would then, presumably, categorise as papal edicts. He accuses us of being Simon Pure but then wants us to say that violence proves nothing, without any ifs and buts—which seems to me to be a much more Simon Pure attitude.

However, if it pleases him. I'll say it. *Violence proves nothing.* We are talking here, of course, in terms of right and wrong. Clearly, the use of violence can prove that one man is stronger than another and a host of similar factual data. What it cannot do is demonstrate that one man is *righter* than another. But I doubt very much if one busman in a thousand thought that he was demonstrating the *rightness* of his case by his 'hooliganism'. What he was trying to do was to stop those bloody blacklegs from taking out the buses. And here we come to the usefulness of violence. It cannot *prove* anything but it is a means of *effecting* certain results.

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Los Angeles. Aug.

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Volume 6, 1956
OIL AND TROUBLED WATERS
312 pages paper 7/6, Cloth 10/6*

IN BRIEF

Colour Makes the Crim

THE following report may seem fantastic to us who advocate and practise the principle of 'living in sin', but to men and women who happen to have different coloured skins *and* live in Rhodesia the threat who must have reported the couple would have been content to gossip in private about the loose morals of the unfortunate woman.

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about your reply to G.G., and with such a wishy-washy case it's understandable.
Salisbury. N.H.

EDITOR'S REPLY :

FOR a reason which I shall soon make clear, I had better emerge from behind the screen of anonymous editorship and take responsibility for both the original article (Is this the Class Struggle?—FREEDOM 3/8/57) to which G.G. took exception and last week's reply to his letter of 17th August.

I do this because I cannot remember a time when the Editors of FREEDOM had to admit to being wrong, but I have a very strong recollection of myself being very wrong, in an article written over my initials, and admitting it. Readers may remember that about a year ago —maybe more—if I may be allowed to use the word—I indulged in a controversy with a Mr. Gelstein in which I betrayed considerable ignorance of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1942. N.H. will, I am sure, be glad to hear that I ate humble pie about that, and if he wants the evidence in print I will go to the trouble of looking it out of the files for him.

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No, we certainly don't mind criticism, but surely N.H. doesn't mind either if we answer back? I fancy that he would soon lose confidence in us if we backed down as soon as we were criticised and couldn't find arguments to justify our contentions. The fortunate fact is that we *are* nearly always right, and I don't say that with Papal dogmatism, but with agree—like that of the busmen in South London who struck against coloured labour being introduced—and others which we don't really care about one way or the other. The bus strike was one such, which is why we were cool about it and that made it all the more surprising that G.G. should take us to task for, as he thought, supporting the violence of the strikers.

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PROGRESS OF A DEFICIT!

WEEK 35

Deficit on *Freedom*	**£700**
Contributions received	**£450**
DEFICIT	**£250**

August 23 to August 29

Monton: P.H. 6/6; London: J.S.* 3/-; Hailsham: L.S. 1/6; Blackpool: R.B. 1/10; Falmouth: R.W. 2/9; Sheffield: H.W. 2/6; Hartfield: O.M. 17/6.

Total ...	1 15	7
Previous error ...	2 15	0
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Previously acknowledged ...	445 9	10
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Fire Fund

TOTAL TO DATE ...	£368 3	3

GIFTS OF BOOKS: London: C.W.; London: Anon.

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THE following report may seem fantastic to us who advocate and practise the principle of 'living in sin', but to men and women who happen to have different coloured skins *and* live in Rhodesia the threat of jail hangs over them if they should indulge in the unforgivable sin of sexual intercourse, unless of course they are protected by the holy bonds of Christian marriage.

The report told us that:

A forty-nine-year-old Englishwomen was sentenced to nine months' hard labour to-day for having illicit intercourse with an African in her cottage.

The magistrate, Mr. C. A. Redfern, described the case as "one of the most serious ever to come before the courts in a multi-racial country".

Mrs. Muriel Nancy Pardoe-Matthews told the court she had been in Rhodesia for 18 months and did not realise intimacy with an African was illegal.

She said she had heard of a European woman living with an African in Southern Rhodesia.

Mr. Redfern said the case Mrs. Pardoe-Matthews referred to was "a very different relationship—that of Christian marriage. You were fully aware of the guilt of your actions."

It would be grossly unfair he added, if she should receive less severe punishment than the African, Mutandwa—recently jailed for six months for his part in the offence.

Mrs. Pardoe-Matthews and Mutandwa—a lorry driver—were in the position of master and servant. She must have encouraged him, and her guilt was more serious than his, he said.

The two important factors against the couple was the difference in colour and their supposed unequal social status. But if the lorry driver had been a white man the snoopers who must have reported the couple would have been content to gossip in private about the loose morals of the unfortunate woman.

The principles which govern the sexual life of black and white in Rhodesia are no different in kind from those in South Africa and the Southern States of America. The breakdown of ridiculous social customs will only come about by the power of human relationships overcoming the threat of punishment.

Mrs. Pardoe-Matthews will be deported to England after serving her sentence. The ill-effects on this woman's life as a result of her 'guilt' being made public will be of little interest to the hypocritical guardians of our morals.

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In that situation there are only two alternatives, assuming that the attacker *is* beyond the reach of reason: (1) to fight back; (2) to run away. If N.H. thinks (1) is the right answer then he is saying that violence can effect something even if it doesn't prove anything, which is what I say. And if he thinks (2) is the right tactic then he is accepting what, in this hypothetical example, is the equivalent of sitting on the fence, which is what I did about the bus strike. So where do we differ?

I have rather gone on in this reply, because I don't like any of our customers to feel dissatisfied, but there is one final point I should like to make, if I may. For the sake of brevity, much of the editorial writing in FREEDOM assumes a certain attitude in our readership and a degree of understanding of our own attitude. We simply cannot spell out the ABC of our own attitude in every issue, nor would our regular readership like it if we did. It does, however, have a salutary effect upon our writing if we feel that our readers are really closely checking on what we have to say. It makes us more careful in our choice of words, and clearer, we hope, in our thinking. Therefore, far from resenting criticism, we welcome it. Controversy is the life of a movement like ours and should figure much more in our paper than it does. Only don't forget we can dish it out as well as take it!

P.S.

The Do It Yourself Civilization Kit

GENTLEMEN,

There is something new on the market in the way of supplies for the family bomb shelter. Food, water, radio, first-aid kit, tranquilizers, and other articles essential to surviving a thorough bombing are no longer enough. Leading authorities now believe that some preparation should be made for the hour when the shelter user emerges from his refuge and must adjust himself to a somewhat altered society.

In response to this urgent need comes a compact kit which may be kept in the bomb shelter until needed. After much investigation the manufacturer eliminated all non-essentials and included only those items which he felt were basic equipment for the bomb survivor.

This fast-selling package is called the "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit". It contains two dry sticks (for starting a fire), a bow and arrow, a small bag of corn seed, and a stone axe, all wrapped snugly in a piece of untanned leopard skin. As you can see, the "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit" has within it everything the bomb survivor needs to establish his new home in comfort and security with every hope of a bright future. The bomb survivor who does not have a "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit" will be at a distinct disadvantage. For that reason and because too few realize the need for equipment of this type, the manufacturer is, for a limited time only, including a genuine bone fish-hook with each "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit"! That makes this item, already reasonably priced, a real bargain. These kits would make wonderful gifts for your friends and relatives, too. Think what fun it would be if you could all start a civilization together! Visit your friendly neighbour dealer and order *yours* to-day!

Yours truly,

Los Angeles, Aug. 12. I.A.W.

Now Ready!

SELECTIONS FROM "FREEDOM"

Volume 6, 1956

OIL AND TROUBLED WATERS

312 pages paper 7/6, Cloth 10/6*

HUH?

Northern troops from the Muscat coast and Southern forces of the Sultan advancing from the captured strongholds of Firq and Nizwa linked up to-day.

Grenades and mines discovered in Firq and Nizwa were not of British pattern, but had their markings written in English. Asked whether they were American-made, an R.A.F. spokesman refused to answer.—*Reuter*.

MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Tottenham Court Road, W.1.

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The tightrope act will be the main feature of this week's TUC Congress at Blackpool where the union leaders will once again demonstrate their ability to serve the workers, the State and the Party all at the same time. The fact that the interests of the State and he Party are opposed to the workers is likely to be ignored by all concerned, including the workers.

SIR AND HIS LADY

A HAPPY picture of the worker who made good faced us in our newspaper this morning (Monday, September 2nd). Sir Thomas Williamson, President of the TUC, was snapped with Lady Williamson on the front at Blackpool yesterday. This titled worker brings an air of restraint and respectability to the TUC. We are quite sure that no revolutionary decisions to change the economic structure of society will be made as long as men like Sir Tom are at the helm. Of course it is not only the men who have made the grade who will be interested in keeping privilege going, but the ones who are on the way up.

We are afraid that the TUC Congress this year at Blackpool will contribute as much to the idea of a new society as it has done on previous years.

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BONAR THOMSON speaks

Every Friday and Saturday:
SOCIAL EVENINGS

LIBERTARIAN FORUM

813 Broadway,
(Between 11th and 12th Sts.)
New York City.
Friday Evenings at 8.30

September 13.—Russell Blackwell:
INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY IN TO-DAY'S AMERICA.

MONTHLY SOCIAL SUPPER
Saturday, August 17
at 7.30 p.m.
VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTION

FREEDOM

The Anarchist Weekly

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Freedom
THE ANARCHIST WEEKLY

Vol. 18, No. 36. September 7, 1957

The Essence of Freedom

Continued from p. 2

papers in this country which exist for the sole purpose of publishing news straight, without considerations of readers' reactions or effect on advertisers, political supporters or other pressure groups . . . not to mention the political leanings or ambitions of the publishers or editor).

★

WE suspect the Press when it poses as the champion of freedom, and the guarantee that the voice of informed public opinion shall be heard and followed by governments. The Press, like the police, carries on whatever régime is in power. When dictatorships take over, or countries are "occupied" as in France in the last war, the Press, with a few honourable exceptions of men who are locked up or join the ranks of the world's refugees, carries on. When "liberation" came in France in 1945 the newspapers which had collaborated were not allowed to publish under their old titles, and in Italy the change of régimes was marked by just adding the word "new" to the old title. Are we to believe however that a new set of journalists replaced the old overnight?

The only real believers in the freedom of the Press are symbolised by the resistance movement in Spain which 18 years after Franco's seizure of power goes on expressing its belief in this freedom by issuing its clandestine newspapers printed and distributed under the most difficult conditions and incurring risks undreamed of by the editor of the *Times* in his wildest moments of independence from governmental ukases! What have the eminent liberal Spanish journalists produced in these years as a contribution to the freedom of information—that "essence of freedom"—in Spain? What indeed has the *Times* published in its columns in the past 18 years to encourage those in Spain who have gambled their lives to keep alive the idea that a free press is the "essence of freedom", and to encourage Franco and his entourage to see the light?

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WE suspect the Press when it leads the crusade against the concentration of all power in the hands of government. In fact the

less, brainless, parrots without an opinion of their own.

Perhaps the strongest condem-

THE VOLGA RISES IN EUROPE, by Curzio Malaparte. Redman. 16s.

THE sterile materialism that is accompanying the present Technological Revolution is also producing a society of spectators, willing audiences who have no desire to participate or to exercise the rich variety of their individualism. With this tendency there is a compensating attempt to give significance to a barren reality by linking it with the past and, in one way or another, to take refuge in that past. "Yes, these really are the 'new Elizabethans'," says Kingsley Martin to himself as he witnesses Merdeka celebrations by Malayan students. "In terms of history," writes the Philippine Ambassador, "it is the Asians who are the new Elizabethans, sure of honour and glory . . . " The delivering to his wife of Mussolini's carcase has caused one Italian newspaper to write: "Mussolini is returning to the Romagna, to Italy,

Film Review

WITCH HUNT

(*The Witches of Salem*, The Academy Cinema).

EVERY now and then a vast surge of what we would call demonic possession (if we believed in such things as demons), sweeps through Europe, and believe it or not, America. There was the dancing fever of the Middle Ages, the Titus Oates plot, the Moscow trials, the Nazi pogroms, the Palmer raids, Senator McCarthy, Elvis Presley and the Salem Witch trials. In these maladies individuals lose possession of their senses and give themselves over to strange convulsions, peculiar accusations, delusions of persecution, delusions of grandeur, then like a epileptic fit the attack dies away and the community is left weak and exhausted, wondering what hit them. War could be believed to be an extension of the fit but this is a disease dignified by the State into normal health.

The concept of man as a rational animal has taken many knocks but the persistence of these attacks leads one to believe that given irrational circumstances and unnatural surroundings man will act fully in conformity with these surroundings.

In the Salem Witch trials of 1692, the community was seized by a cult of denunciation of harmless old women as witches. The accusations were made by a group of young girls who threw fits on being confronted by the people they denounced. Many of the accused were tortured and confessed so they were executed as witches; if they survived the torture and did not confess they were executed on the evidence. If they died under torture it was God's will. Eventually the girls went too far in their accusations and denounced citizens of some standing in the community. It was only then that their perjured evidence was discovered to be untrue and no more trials were held.

Upon this basis Arthur Miller has written *The Crucible*, and upon this Jean-Paul Sartre has adapted the film, and Mai Harris translated for sub-titles. At this remove it is impossible to evaluate Arthur Miller's play, particularly since Sartre has joined the witch-hunters of Moscow (on and off) and Arthur Miller has been hunted as a witch but it is possible to see the idealistic conviction shining through Sartre's intellectual abstractions.

The peg on which this hangs is the story of a Puritan (Yves Montand) with a frigid wife (Simone Signoret). The Puritan, John Proctor, has a affaire with a servant-girl (Mylene Demongeot), who goes to a 'witch' for help with her love-affair. She is discovered in the forest by the clergyman and the group turn and denounce the 'witches' in the community. The trials go on and eventually the Puritan, John Proctor, is drawn in and denounced as a 'witch' but not before the community has revolted against the witch-hunt. Proctor is hanged but the populace has learned the lesson and the witch-hunts are finished. The personal story of John Proctor detracts from the strength of the narrative. The idea that the heads of the community encouraged the witch-hunts so that they could further their own ends, seems to be a reflection of the C.P. line, which Jean-Paul Sartre was travelling on at the time of the making of the film.

There are indications of the attack on Miller by the Committee for the Investigation of UnAmerican Activities, especially when John Proctor is asked to sign a confession which he repudiates.

It is ironical that Jean-Paul Sartre collaborated on the screen play at a time when he endorsed the witch-hunters of Moscow but nevertheless all motives swept aside, it is a lesson that needs to be taught.

The film is well made with the scenes of the witches' meeting and the denunciations and hysteria at the trials predominating. The acting of Yves Montand and Simone Signoret is, as usual, excellent and the newcomer Mylene Demongeot is superlative in her part as a witch-finder.

We must thank the Academy again for showing such an intelligent film and hope that the provinces will not miss a chance of seeing it.

J.R.

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THE South African Nationalist Government is often underestimated, not in the sense that it is less dangerous than it appears, but because it is much more dangerous. There is a tendency to suppose that it consists of a group of slow-thinking, reactionary Boers who have not grasped the fundamentals of how to govern and are wildly casting about for a way of maintaining white supremacy—that in due course they will realise their stupidity and retrace their steps back along the path to democracy. After all, it is said, South Africa still belongs to

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agree—like that of the busmen in South London who struck against coloured labour being introduced—and others which we don't really care about one way or the other. The bus strike was one such, which is why we were cool about it and that made it all the more surprising that G.G. should take us to task for, as he thought, supporting the violence of the strikers.

Now it is a bit difficult to see from N.H.'s letter just what his position is, or what he wants of us except a series of positive statements—which he would then, presumably, categorise as papal edicts. He accuses us of being Simon Pure but then wants us to say that violence proves nothing, without any ifs and buts—which seems to me to be a much more Simon Pure attitude.

However, if it pleases him, I'll say it. *Violence proves nothing.* We are talking here, of course, in terms of right and wrong. Clearly, the use of violence can prove that one man is stronger than another and a host of similar factual data. What it cannot do is demonstrate that one man is *righter* than another. But essential to surviving a thorough bombing are no longer enough. Leading authorities now believe that some preparation should be made for the hour when the shelter user emerges from his refuge and must adjust himself to a somewhat altered society.

In response to this urgent need comes a compact kit which may be kept in the bomb shelter until needed. After much "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit". It contains two dry sticks (for starting a fire), a bow and arrow, a small bag of corn seed, and a stone axe, all wrapped snugly in a piece of untanned leopard skin. As you can see, the "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit" has within it everything the bomb survivor needs to establish his new home in comfort and security with every hope of a bright future. The bomb survivor who does not have a "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit" will be at a distinct disadvantage. For that reason and because too few realize the need for equipment of this type, the manufacturer is, for a limited time only, including a genuine bone fish-hook with each "Do It Yourself Civilization Kit"! That makes this item, already reasonably priced, a real bargain. These kits would make wonderful gifts for your friends and relatives, too. Think what fun it would be if you could all start a civilization together! Visit your friendly neighbour dealer and order *yours* to-day!

Yours truly,

Los Angeles, Aug. 12. I.A.W.

Now Ready!

SELECTIONS FROM "FREEDOM"

Volume 6, 1956

OIL AND TROUBLED WATERS

312 pages paper 7/6, Cloth 10/6*

IN BRIEF

Colour Makes the Crime

THE following report may seem fantastic to us who advocate and practise the principle of 'living in sin', but to men and women who happen to have different coloured skins *and* live in Rhodesia the threat of jail hangs over them if they should indulge in the unforgivable sin of sexual intercourse, unless of course they are protected by the holy bonds of Christian marriage.

The report told us that:

A forty-nine-year-old Englishwomen was sentenced to nine months' hard labour to-day for having illicit intercourse with an African in her cottage.

The magistrate, Mr. C. A. Redfern, described the case as "one of the most serious ever to come before the courts in a multi-racial country".

Mrs. Muriel Nancy Pardoe-Matthews told the court she had been in Rhodesia for 18 months and did not realise intimacy with an African was illegal.

She said she had heard of a European woman living with an African in Southern Rhodesia.

Mr. Redfern said the case Mrs. Pardoe-Matthews referred to was "a very different relationship—that of Christian marriage. You were fully aware of the guilt of your actions."

It would be grossly unfair he added, if she should receive less severe punishment than the African, Mutandwa—recently jailed for six months for his part in the offence.

Mrs. Pardoe-Matthews and Mutandwa—a lorry driver—were in the position of master and servant. She must have encouraged him, and her guilt was more serious than his, he said.

The two important factors against the couple was the difference in colour and their supposed unequal social status. But if the lorry driver had been a white man the snoopers who must have reported the couple would have been content to gossip in private about the loose morals of the unfortunate woman.

The principles which govern the sexual life of black and white in Rhodesia are no different in kind from those in South Africa and the Southern States of America. The breakdown of ridiculous social customs will only come about by the power of human relationships overcoming the threat of punishment.

Mrs. Pardoe-Matthews will be deported to England after serving her sentence. The ill-effects on this woman's life as a result of her 'guilt' being made public will be of little interest to the hypocritical guardians of our morals.

TUC ON THE TIGHTROPE

IT appears that five of the big trade unions have decided to reject the Labour Party's economic plan to buy shares in big companies as an alternative to 'old fashioned' nationalisation. But optimists who see in this the beginnings of a split between the TUC and the Labour Party are likely to be disappointed (although there may be a break in the future). The Labour Party needs the trade unions maybe more than the other way around and it will take all the cunning of the big brains in the Labour Party to get round the objections.

Their task is going to be made easier by Frank Cousins, boss of the Transport & General Workers' Union, who, it is reported, will support the new policy on two conditions. These are that buying shares must not be a permanent substitute for outright nationalisation, and definite target dates should be fixed to this end. The Cousins lead may influence other unions who might have supported Jim Campbell, leader of the National Union of Railwaymen, who is the chief opposer to the Labour Party's new policy.

The tightrope act will be the main feature of this week's TUC Congress at Blackpool where the union leaders will once again demonstrate their ability to serve the workers, the State and the Party all at the same time. The fact that the interests of the State and he Party are opposed to the workers is likely to be ignored by all concerned, including the workers.

SIR AND HIS LADY

A HAPPY picture of the worker who made good faced us in our newspaper this morning (Monday, September 2nd). Sir Thomas Williamson, President of the TUC, was snapped with Lady Williamson on the front at Blackpool yesterday. This titled worker brings an air of restraint and respectability to the TUC. We are quite sure that no revolutionary decisions to change the economic structure of society will be made as long as men like Sir Tom are at the helm. Of course it is not only the men who have made the grade who will be interested in keeping privilege going, but the ones who are on the way up.

We are afraid that the TUC Congress this year at Blackpool will contribute as much to the idea of a new society as it has done on previous years.

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